



Town of Rowe
Board of Selectmen Minutes
Thursday May 14, 2020 –6:30 p.m.
VIA TELECONFERENCE

This meeting will be held via video conference, consistent with Gov. Baker's temporary modifications to Open Meeting Law.

REMOTE PARTICIPATION INFORMATION:

Video and/or audio

Meeting Host: zoom.us

Meeting ID: 288-065-7034

URL: <https://zoom.us/j/2880657034>

Telephone: 312-626-6799

Present: Chair Chuck Sokol, Ed Silva, Selectman and Executive Secretary Janice Boudreau

Absent: Vice-Chair Jennifer Morse

Audience: Joanne Semanie, Paul McLatchy III, Loretta Dionne, Rosie Gordon

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chair Sokol at 6:30 p.m. via remote participation.

MOTION: Roll call vote to call to order:

Chair Sokol: yes

Selectman Silva: yes

Vice-Chair Morse: absent

Scheduled Presentations/Joint Meetings

EXECUTIVE SESSION: MOTION: Chair Sokol made a motion to move to Executive Session for the following purpose:

“To discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual. The individual to be discussed in such executive session shall be notified in writing by the public body at least 48 hours prior to the proposed executive session; provided, however, that notification may be waived upon written agreement of the parties.”

The motion was seconded by Selectman Silva.

MOTION: Roll call vote to move to Executive Session:

Chair Sokol: yes

Selectman Silva: yes

Vice-Chair Morse: absent

Return to Open Session: MOTION: At 7:02 p.m. Chair Sokol made a motion to return to Open Session.

The motion was seconded by Selectman Silva.

MOTION: Roll call vote to move to return to Open Session:

Chair Sokol: yes

Selectman Silva: yes

Vice-Chair Morse: absent

Announcement of recording devices: There are two recording devices.

1. Meeting Minutes:

- a) Minutes 04-21-2020: Following review it was decided to check on Selectman Silva's attendance and table until the next meeting.

- b) Minutes 04-23-2020:

Motion to Accept Minutes: Chair Sokol made a motion to accept the Minutes of April 23, 2020 as amended. The motion was seconded by Selectman Silva.

Roll Call Vote: Minutes of April 23, 2020:

Chair Sokol: yes

Selectman Silva: yes

Vice-Chair Morse: absent

- c) Minutes 04-30-2020:

Motion to Accept Minutes: Chair Sokol made a motion to accept the Minutes of April 30, 2020 as amended. The motion was seconded by Selectman Silva.

Roll Call Vote: Minutes of April 30, 2020:

Chair Sokol: yes

Selectman Silva: yes

Vice-Chair Morse: absent

Noteworthy Announcements: None

Correspondence/Citizen Comments as received: None

Unforeseen Business (within preceding 48 hours):

Selectman Silva said John Magnago had contacted him and asked about the flag at Town Common. Janice Boudreau said she had ordered flags for Town Hall, one to replace the POW flag and the second to replace the new flag she had provided to Mr. Magnago as he said it was not large enough. Ms. Boudreau said that the rope for the flags had been replaced by DPW Superintendent and that she had left 3 phone messages and an email to Mr. Magnago informing him of the progress and that he had not responded to her. The Memorial Day Service was discussed since Mr. Magnago had planned and organize the event in the past and the Board of Health Clerk had contacted Mr. Magnago about it and he did not respond as yet.

Municipal Light Plant (MLP) Broadband Project Updates and Discussion:

Fiber Hut Work: Selectman Silva said he had met with Tom Danek on 3 occasions to discuss having finish gravel work around the front and sides of the broadband hut and looming and seeding of the area fertilized and mulched. He received a quotation of \$2,100.00.

A quotation of \$4,500.00 came in for shrubs and plantings to hide the hut, generator, propane tank and vault as well as final grade, seed and mulch all disturbed areas. In addition, David Dvore, MLP Manager requested a grate to be installed at the front door. Executive Secretary noted that she heard that perhaps the paving from Pond Road this summer could include the front of the hut. Selectman Silva said that it would be good if David Dvore could coordinate with Tom Danek to make certain that his concerns are addressed.

MOTION TO ACCEPT THE BID: Chair Sokol made a motion to accept the bids from Danek Excavating not to exceed the amount of \$7,000.00 to cover the cost of the finish gravel work and beautification of the area with planting as per Danek Excavating quotes. The motion was seconded by Selectman Silva.

Roll Call Vote to Accept Bid:

Chair Sokol: **yes**

Selectman Silva: **yes**

Vice-Chair Morse: **absent**

Liaison Reports (DPW, Fire, Police, Town Hall):

Town Signs: Executive Secretary reported that the Entering Rowe sign and the Charlemont/Rowe border sign have been stolen. She asked that Board if they had a preference of whether to replace the signs as they were or to purchase a traditional entering with the town name as standard for the vast majority of MA towns and cities. The Board asked that the prices be obtained.

Board of Selectmen Business

New Business

1. Town Election – Town Clerk: Paul McLatchy III speaking as Town Clerk presented an Election Warrant for the Board to approve and sign. Mr. McLatchy III said he had presented his plan for a safe town election on June 27, 2020. There was discussion about shortening the voting hours to four hours, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. He noted that he had received over 100 requests for Absentee Ballots and that was the preferred method to reduce any health risk during the COVID-19 pandemic. There was discussion about maintaining safe distancing at Town Hall especially in waiting lines.

MOTION TO ACCEPT AND SIGN TOWN ELECTION WARRANT: Chair Sokol made a motion to accept and sign the Annual Town Election Warrant – FY2021 for Saturday, June 27, 2020 as presented by Town Clerk. The motion was seconded by Selectman Silva.

Roll Call Vote to Sign Annual Town Election – FY2021:

Chair Sokol: **yes**

Selectman Silva: **yes**

Vice-Chair Morse: **absent**

Town Meeting Discussion: There was discussion about the Annual Town Meeting and Town Clerk said he thought it could be held outside for a safer environment. Holding the Annual

Town Meeting on a weekend day might prove to be safer and well attended. Having an adequate audio system was discussed and Chair Sokol said he could assist with that. Selectman Silva said that perhaps having custodian for the day cleaning and having attendees wear masks would help. It was decided to ask Town Moderator Bob Clancy attend the next meeting on May 28th to discuss the details.

2. FY21 Budget Finalization: It was decided that the discussion is tabled until the full board is present.
3. Summer Youth Program: There was discussion about safely conducting the Summer Youth Program for the Grasshoppers this summer. Transportation and retaining a safe distance would be challenging. It was decided to discuss further once the Governor's plan for the phased in reopening was out.
4. Old Home Day 2020: There was discussion about the 2020 Old Home Day event. Loretta Dionne said that she and Vice-Chair Jennifer Morse had spoken and decided to cancel the event.
5. Set up COVID-19 Account: There was discussion about setting up a Covid-19 Account due to expenses incurred by the Covid-19 pandemic that was not previously budgeted for which would be deficit spent.

MOTION TO SET UP COVID-19 ACCOUNT: Chair Sokol made a motion to set up a COVID-19 deficit spending account with a limit of \$10,000.00 not previously budgeted for in FY2020 for expenses related to COVID-19 response. The motion was seconded by Selectman Silva.

Roll Call Vote to Sign Set up COVID-19 Account:

Chair Sokol: yes

Selectman Silva: yes

Vice-Chair Morse: absent

6. Reserve Officer – Police Chief Request: Chief Shippee requested that Henry Dandeneau be appointed as a Reserve Police Officer due to the pandemic the work hours and availability of an officer changed.

MOTION TO APPOINT RESERVE OFFICER: Chair Sokol made a motion to appoint Henry Dandeneau as a Reserve Police Officer due to the vacancy caused by the pandemic in the event a police officer is required.

Roll Call Vote to Appoint Reserve Officer:

Chair Sokol: yes

Selectman Silva: yes

Vice-Chair Morse: absent

Old Business

1. Continued discussion:

- a) Potential Town Administrator Position: Discussion was tabled.
- b) Town Administrator Assistant Job Description: Discussion was tabled.
- c) Town Administrator Draft Bylaw Proposal: Discussion was tabled.

- d) Direct Deposit Deadline Extension: Administrative Assistant requested an extension to the date of requiring that all employees change to direct deposit from July 1, 2020 to a later date. It was explained that many banks are at reduced hours and services.

MOTION TO EXTEND DIRECT DEPOSIT REQUIREMENT: Chair Sokol made a motion to extend the employee policy recently updated requiring wages and salaries be paid by direct deposit from the July 1, 2020 deadline to August 15, 2020. The motion was seconded by Selectman Silva.

Roll Call Vote to Extend Direct Deposit Deadline:

Chair Sokol: yes

Selectman Silva: yes

Vice-Chair Morse: absent

Unforeseen Business (within preceding 48 hours):

Employee Compensation Concern: Administrative Assistant Paul McLatchy III requested that the Board consider authorizing a one month grace period to school employees that were recently laid off due to the uncertainty of the FY21 School Budget with regards to their employee benefits. If the school budget passes as presented and the school were to reopen the 6 employees would, most likely, be rehired. Mr. McLatchy asked that, rather than to cancel benefits for one month and then re-enroll the employees in their various benefits, that the Board consider a one month extension of benefits.

MOTION TO EXTEND BENEFITS: Chair Sokol made a motion to continue the benefits for 6 school employees from June 30, 2020 to July 31, 2020. The motion was seconded by Selectman Silva.

Roll Call Vote to Continue Benefits to July 31, 2020:

Chair Sokol: yes

Selectman Silva: yes

Vice-Chair Morse: absent

Citizen Comments: None

Adjournment:

MOTION: Chair Sokol made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:40p.m. The motion was seconded by Chair Sokol.

A roll call vote was taken:

Chair Sokol: yes

Vice-Chair Morse: absent

Selectman Silva: yes

Respectfully Submitted,

Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary

Approval Date: June 1, 2020

Approved:



Chuck Sokol, Chair

Selectman Jennifer Morse, Vice-Chair

Selectman Ed Silva

Documents:

Documents:

1. Agenda 05/14/20
2. Draft Minutes of 04-21-2020
3. Draft Minutes of 04-23-2020
4. Draft Minutes of 04-30-2020
5. Draft Minutes of 05-07-2020
6. Danek Excavating Estimates
7. Executive Secretary Updates
8. DLS Guidelines Bulletin 2020-04, 05 & 06 with "Acts to Address Challenges Faced by Municipalities and State Authorities Resulting from Covid-19"
9. COVID-19 Group Notes of 5-12-2020
10. Local Election Warrant